

VIRGINIA ROANOKE RIVER BASIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Bedford, Virginia
March 31, 2010

Virginia Roanoke River Advisory Committee: John Lindsey, Mark Wagner, Bob Jean, Billy Martin, Russ Johnson, Read Charlton, Senator Frank Ruff, , Delegate Thomas Wright, Delegate Charles Poindexter, Haywood Hamlet, John Feild, Mike McEvoy, Tim Pace, Walter Coles

Staff present:

Jason Ericson, VA DEQ; Tammy Stephenson, VA DEQ

Call to Order

Chairman McEvoy called the meeting to order. He added the following items to the agenda: IBT Coalition and Ad Hoc Water Allocation Committee Report - Committee Assignments.

Minutes

Upon a motion by Senator Poindexter, seconded by Mr. Hamlett, minutes of the October 19, 2009 meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentations

Uranium Mining

Tom Leahy, Virginia Beach Director of Public Utilities, gave a presentation at the morning's Roanoke River Basin Bi-State Commission (RRBBC) meeting. Most people attending the VRRBAC afternoon meeting were in attendance at the morning meeting, so the presentation was not repeated. Instead, Mr. Leahy entertained questions and comments from the Committee members and the audience.

In response to a question, Mr. Leahy explained that Virginia Beach was trying to make sure the report is unbiased by establishing an oversight committee. Often, there is a perception that a report will be biased based on who is funding the study. Members of the oversight committee have been selected.

Mr. Leahy was asked to explain the differences between the Virginia Beach study and the one to be conducted by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) for Virginia. Mr. Leahy said it is his understanding that the NAS report will not be doing new studies, but will be looking at existing studies and doing an analysis of them. The Virginia Beach study will model the Banister and Roanoke Rivers, assuming a Probable Maximum Precipitation (PMP) catastrophe and estimate the contaminated sediment that might reach Kerr. A PMP is defined as a year's worth of precipitation in 6-12 hours, per Mr. Leahy.

There was discussion about Virginia Beach's use of desalination as an alternative, should Lake Gaston become unavailable.

Mr. Feild said at some point in the future, the VRRBAC will need a session to hear the pros and cons of uranium mining, but he thought they should probably wait until both studies are completed. Mr. McEvoy agreed and suggested that perhaps we could get consultants to make presentation(s) to explain the reports.

IBT Coalition

Mr. McEvoy mentioned the IBT Coalition presentation given by Gene Addesso at the morning's RRBBC meeting. Mr. Addesso asked that Mr. McEvoy bring up the issue for discussion at the VRRBAC meeting for consideration on whether the VRRBAC could or should be part of this coalition, or possibly form another coalition in the upper basin. There was much discussion about IBT's in Virginia. Riparian rights, and a concern of possible restrictions on Smith Mountain Lake and others upstream due to required releases to support all the potential Kerr allocation.

Mr. McEvoy asked committee members to put some thought into the IBT coalition issue and let him know if they have thoughts/comments.

Mr. Feild said the potential is there for Triangle Research Park in North Carolina to request IBT from Philpott. Should this happen, he thinks the Ad Hoc Committee may be asked to consider it.

Ad Hoc Water Allocation Committee Report

Mr. McEvoy asked all subcommittees to disburse the Report, formally presented at the RRBBC meeting, to all their members, local governments, constituents, etc. He would like comments, emailed or written, submitted to Ms. Stephenson by May 1. He understands that deadline might not work for all the local governments, but everyone should aim for this goal and should be prepared to discuss the issue at the June meeting of VRRBAC. A copy of the Ad Hoc Committee report is part of the minutes of this meeting.

There was brief discussion on the pros and cons of banking allocation.

Delegate Wright said he wants stronger language in the agreement with regard to subordinate uses and water not returned to the basin (Allocation Principle 6). Delegate Poindexter initiated discussion about nonriparian uses as they relate to Allocation Principle 5.

The draft agreement will be discussed at length at the June meeting.

Sub-Committee Reports

Agriculture and Forestry Sub-Committee

Subcommittee Chair Haywood Hamlet said he has two people in mind to make presentation(s) at the next VRRBAC meeting, and suggested the meeting be held in Brookneal or Charlotte Court House to make it convenient for the presenters. He will work with Ms. Stephenson on a meeting location.

Lake Interests Sub-Committee

Subcommittee Chair Russ Johnson had to leave before this report, so Mark Wagner, subcommittee member, gave the report. A conference call meeting was held March 30, and many lake issues were discussed, mainly focusing on Smith Mountain Lake and Leesville Lake. There was discussion at the subcommittee meeting that membership of the subcommittee needs to be expanded to include representatives from all lakes in the Basin. Bill Lindenmuth is a member of the subcommittee, but was unable to make the call.

There was discussion on Robert Conner's status, as he has been ill and unable to attend meetings. There is an understanding that Mr. Conner will submit his resignation and a replacement will be made. Committee members expressed their thoughts for Mr. Conner and his family.

Permit Holders Sub-Committee

Subcommittee Chair John Lindsey said he is in the process of contacting all the permit holders that were on a list provided to him by DEQ. He is explaining the benefit of permit holders becoming more involved in VRRBAC and its subcommittees. Mr. Lindsey is starting with the largest withdrawers and dischargers.

Public Officials and Government Entities Sub-Committee

As Robert Conner is the sitting chair for this Sub-Committee, Mr. McEvoy asked Bob Jean or Billy Martin to consider taking this over, as they are both currently elected officials in their respective jurisdictions.

Roanoke River Interests Sub-Committee

Subcommittee Chair Read Charlton said he attended the Uranium Mining Symposium recently held in Richmond. He would like to wait on the NAS and Virginia Beach studies to be completed before the issue is raised with VRRBAC.

Mr. Hamlet and Mr. Jean discussed the River Float/Festival which will occur in late spring.

Ms. Stephenson offered assistance to the subcommittees to help organize meetings, etc.

Mr. Feild said that with regard to the Lake Interests Subcommittee, he would like the shoreline management plan for Kerr to be referred to this subcommittee for consideration, as the consultant has asked for comments. Also, he is willing to serve on this subcommittee to represent Kerr. Tim Pace offered to represent Philpott on the subcommittee.

Other Business

Mr. McEvoy thanked Senator Ruff and Delegate Wright for getting the legislation passed that was needed with regard to terms of VRRBAC and Bi-State Commission members.

Next Meeting Date

Mr. McEvoy said he would like VRRBAC to hold a meeting prior to the RRBBC meeting in June so the Ad Hoc Committee report can be discussed. RRBBC is targeting late June for a meeting, so he asked members to consider early June for a meeting. Ms. Stephenson will poll everyone to see the most convenient date.

As there was no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.